and Posts have separate wings exclusively looking after the work of welfare of Indian nationals. Officials of these Wings regularly visit the prisons to find out if there are any detained Indian nationals and to render permissible assistance.

Issuance of Short Time Visas

3170. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Pakistan High Commission in India is not issuing short time visa for various category applicants as our Indian High Commissioner office is issuing to Pak-Nationals;

(b) whether there was any mutual understanding for issuing such visas usually to various categories; and

(c) whether Government have taken up this matter with Pakistan Government or Pak consulate in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes, Sir. Government is aware that Pakistan Government has prescribed a period of minimum eight weeks for processing of visas for Indian nationals. The Ministry of External Affairs is also aware that Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi issues far fewer visas than High Commission of India, Islamabad.

(b) and (c) The different categories of visas that can be granted to Indians and Pakistani nationals are provided for under the bilateral Visa Agreement between India and Pakistan signed in September 1974 as modified from time to time. The Agreement provides for different categories of visas which include diplomatic, non-diplomatic and official visas, visitor visas and transit visas. Both the Governments of India and Pakistan have been issuing visas for business purposes, attending conferences, seminars and trade exhibitions, pilgrimages, cultural, academic and sports related matters.

However, the administrative procedures and grant of visas are internal matters of the respective countries.